

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review

Modifications Statement

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Date of report: February 2024, updated July 2024

1. Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan regulations require that the Parish Council publish a statement setting out whether or not it considers that the modifications proposed are so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan, and to give reasons for this opinion.

2. Main Modifications Proposed

The main changes proposed as part of the review of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, as impacting on the plan's policies, are set out below. Amendments to these / additional changes made as a result of the Regulation 14 consultation are highlighted in **bold italic**. Other changes are minor in nature, such as factual updates on how community facilities are being used, and improvements to the clarity of phrasing in places.

The plan period (2017 – 2031), vision and objectives remain unchanged.

The main changes proposed to the plan policies are summarised below:

Policy	Main change
– Policy FM2. Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species	Simplification of the policy and updates to the supporting text to reflect the latest changes on biodiversity net gain and mitigation being introduced through the Levelling Up Act and subsequent updating of the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol, including reference to incorporating wildlife-friendly features into the design and layout of new buildings and landscaping schemes. <i>Minor wording change included post Regulation 14 following advice of Dorset Council to improve clarity and links to legal requirements.</i>
– Policy FM4. The setting of the AONB	Amended policy title and text to reference new name (Cranborne Chase National Landscape)
– Policy FM5. Local Landscape Features	Amendment of 'footpaths at the side of the road' to 'footways' for clarity.
– Policy FM6. Dark Skies	Additional detail added to policy with reference to Dark Sky Reserve status of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape, including reference to correlated colour temperature max (2700K Lux) and requirement to ensure any light spillage is directed downwards.
– Policy FM8. Development Layout	Additional text to reference the orientation of buildings to provide roof slopes within 30degrees of south in order to maximise opportunities for solar energy through roof-mounted photovoltaics.
– Policy FM9. Building Design	Insertion of reference to Table 3b within the policy that includes examples of diagrams / illustrations of vernacular designs (that the design of development should have regard to). Additional wording added with reference to energy-efficient measures and rainwater recycling. Deletion of detailed reference to photovoltaics (moved to supporting text). <i>Roof lights removed from Table 3b post Regulation 14 following advice of Cranborne Chase National Landscape Partnership. Policy wording amended to refer to water recovery systems (generic to include grey-water as well as rain-water systems) and reference</i>

added to encouraging the installation of public charging points in accessible locations, provided that these do not harm the rural and historic character of the area, and that where EV charging points are installed, these should be sited so as not to cause an obstruction for other road users.

- Policy FM10. Creating safer roads and pedestrian route
Detail added regarding consideration of West Street and Mill Street which are shared spaces and the consideration of pedestrian / cyclist needs / impacts from development along these routes, including access to local facilities and links onto Fontmell Down. Removal of duplication within policy.
- Correction made to policy cross-reference post Regulation 14**
- Policy FM11. Sustainable drainage
Additional detail added in relation to requiring flood risk modelling / calculation and details of maintenance and control measures to ensure these work effectively. Location of infiltration measures to avoid flooding to the highway or built development.
Additional sentence added post Regulation 14 to reference that any engineered elements should be designed to be unobtrusive and using materials in keeping with the vernacular.
 - Policy FM12. Development impacting on the sewage treatment works.
Policy updated to ensure that the timing of further development beyond the current capacity in the wastewater recycling centre is phased to connect after the necessary upgrades are made.
 - Policy FM13. Important community facilities
Update to recognize that the Blackmore Vale Partnership is not currently operating from the Fontmell Surgery and Clinic (but the building should still be treated as an important community facility in considering any future use).
 - Policy FM14. Social Infrastructure
Additional infrastructure requirement added: Parish-wide upgrades to footpaths to ensure all-weather, all-year-round access as part of a Footpaths for All project – which will include the completion of the West Street to South Street all weather footpath link.
Final bullet referencing play area upgrades removed post Regulation 14 as these have been completed.
 - Policy FM16. Housing Types
Updated to recognize Dorset Local Housing Needs Assessment (November 2021) and latest Census data reinforcing the need for 1 and 2 bedroom homes as part of the housing mix (given the ageing population and reduction in 2 bedroom homes in the parish and significant increase in 4+ bedroom homes). Additional large (4+ bedroom) properties are resisted unless there is evidence to support the need for their construction.
 - Policy FM17. Spatial strategy for new development
Policy updated post Regulation 14 to more clearly set out the spatial strategy and exceptions to new house building outside of the settlement boundary in response to advice of Dorset Council.
 - Policy FM18. Settlement boundary
Additional wording to clarify the consideration of policies outside of the settlement boundary (as per the Local Plan spatial strategy for development in the countryside).

- Policy FM19. Land South of Home Farm (Site 20) *No change – however the site is now largely complete, and therefore this allocation may be removed once fully built out.*
Policy deleted post Regulation 14 as site completed.
- Policy FM20. Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22) Amendments in relation to access arrangements taking into account the partial provision of the access road from Site 20 (Spring Meadows) and importance of delivering that option to reduce unnecessary traffic along West Street.
Policy updated post Regulation 14 to clarify allocation / use of the barn for employment / community facilities, and include reference to the employment / community use of the barn being compatible with the rural nature of the village and nearby residential uses.

3. Consideration

Fontmell Magna Parish Council consider that the proposed modifications are **not** so significant or substantial as to change the nature of the plan.

The reasons for this are as follows:

- The changes do not look to modify the plan period;
- The changes do not look to add, delete or modify the extent of any of the proposed site allocations (other than to remove the policy covering the site allocation that has now been completed), and do not compromise the Plan’s ability to address local needs;
- In terms of housing, the change to the housing mix is relatively limited and should not impact on viability;
- Whilst greater emphasis is placed on design and infrastructure provision, these elements were already contained within the plan and more detail is helpful in clarifying how these issues should be considered;
- A number of changes to the policies are simply reflecting factual updates and updates to the supporting evidence that those policies were based on, but do not alter the general thrust of those policies.